



# Atheist Alliance International


Making a World of Difference With a Positive Voice for Atheism



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## AAI Latest Tweet



http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2010/10/does\_every\_utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed...  
http://fb.me/Jql29xHJ

by Atheist Alliance Int about 20 hours ago

## Upcoming Events

MC-AAI-ADM Coloquio Mexicano de Ateísmo 2010



Saturday, November 13, 2010, Mexico City, Mexico

## Action Alert!

>>> End Proselytizing by the US Military! Sign the petition to end proselytizing by the U.S.  
>>> End Religious Harassment in Rehab! Tell your senators to remove "charitable choice" in counseling for substance abuse or mental health issues.



**DARWIN'S LEGACY**  
in conjunction with the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science



Burbank Airport Marriott  
and Convention Center  
Burbank California U.S.A.  
October 2-4 2009

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## Community Partners



## Susan Jacoby awarded the AAI 2010 Richard Dawkins Award

Written by Atheist Alliance | 07 October 2010

US author and historian Susan Jacoby Honored with AAI 2010 Richard Dawkins Award at AAI North American convention in Montréal, Quebec October 2

Susan Jacoby, author of *Freethinkers: An American History* and *The Age of American Unreason*, was recognized and applauded for her work in forwarding the US and international freethought movements at the 2010 AAI North American convention held in Montréal, Quebec the weekend of October 1 - 3, 2010.

Jacoby was honored with the AAI 2010 Richard Dawkins Award, an award presented since 2003 to notable individuals for their work on behalf of promoting atheism and freethought around the world. Past recipients include Bill Maher, Penn and Teller, Julia Sweeney, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Daniel Dennett, Ann Druyan, and James Randi.



AAI 2010 Richard Dawkins Award

Jacoby was unable to attend the event due to complications from recent surgery. The award was accepted on behalf of Susan Jacoby by Ken Bronstein of the New York City Atheists.

Below is a recording of Jacoby's acceptance speech, recorded prior to the convention (The acceptance speech and the following dialogue was part of an hour-long podcast recorded by [The Good Atheist](#))

MP3:

## New AAI Officers, Board elected for 2010-2011

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The AAI Board elected its replacement and a new set of AAI officers for the 2010-2011 terms at its annual board meeting held in Montréal on October 1 prior to AAI's 2010 North American convention.

The four new officers elected are:

President: **Nick Lee** (Texas, USA). – President, Freethinkers Association of Central Texas. Nick is the co-founder and Vice President of Texas Freethought Convention, now in its third year of successful state-wide conferences. He is also on the Advisory Board of the San Antonio chapter of Americans United. He is a retired Federal employee with a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Southern California. Nick replaces **Stuart Bechman**, who had served as AAI's president for the past two years and who declined to run for a new term.



Vice President: **Conor McGrath** (Dublin, Ireland) – Conor is on the executive committee of Atheist Ireland, where he takes the lead responsibility for developing lobbying and advocacy activities. He has worked as a professional lobbyist in the United Kingdom, and later as an assistant professor in political lobbying and public affairs at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. Conor replaces **Patty Guzikowski**, who had served as AAI's vice-president for the past year. Patty was instead elected to AAI's board for 2010-2011.

Treasurer: **Linda Shaw** (Toronto, Canada) – Management consultant and self-employed artist. Linda has previously served as treasurer and a board member of Humanist Canada. Linda replaces **Kay Dickey**, who had served as AAI's treasurer for the past six years. Kay declined to run for a new term.

Secretary: **Heather McIntosh** (Georgia, USA) – Heather was re-elected and is continuing in her 3rd year as AAI's Secretary.

8 directors were elected to the 2010-2011 AAI Board. Nick Lee was automatically appointed to the board in his role as AAI president.

The new 2010-2011 AAI board is as follows:

Nick Lee (President, Texas, USA)  
Conor McGrath (Vice President, Dublin, Ireland)  
Linda Shaw (Treasurer, Toronto, Canada)  
Patty Guzikowski (Wisconsin, USA)  
Bobbie Kirkhart (California, USA)  
Terry McDonald (Texas, USA)  
Shelley Mountjoy (D.C., USA)  
Tanya Smith (Melbourne, Australia)  
Jesper Vind (Copenhagen, Denmark)

The new officers and board take effect immediately. Recent bylaws changes have changed the board and officer positions from 1- to staggered 2-year terms; in this transition year, the vice-president and treasurer will be serving for one year, as well as board members Mountjoy, Smith, and Vind, in order to put the term stagger into effect.

## The Case Against Pope Nazism the Case Against “Religious Violence”

29 September 2010

*Exclusive Preview from the October 2010  
release of*

***Cruel Creeds,  
Virtuous Violence:  
Religious Violence***

17 September 2010

### **Pope Attempts to Tie Nazism To Atheism During British Isles Visit**

Observers Strongly Wonder Whether Slur  
Was Intended to Divert Attention from  
Catholic Pedophilia Scandal

Pope Benedict XVI took time out from his British Isles tour this week to provide a deeply mistaken analysis of the 20th century German Nazis in claiming that they "wished to eradicate God from society".

## Activity Stream

6 days ago



[sbechman](#) and [EdanKurzweil](#)  
are now friends

09:11 AM



[sbechman](#) and [MikeNolan](#)  
are now friends

Sep 24



[sbechman](#) and  
[DanielRosenberg](#) are now  
friends

Sep 16



[sbechman](#) uploaded a new  
avatar

Sep 14



[admin](#) uploaded a new avatar

Sep 13



[admin](#) added 1 new photos in  
[Kilembe Valley Humanist  
Primary School](#) album

Sep 12



[admin](#) uploaded a new avatar

Sep 12



[admin](#) added new blog post  
[testing blog post 2...](#)

Sep 07

# Across Culture and History

Publisher: Prometheus Books

ISBN-10: 1616142189      ISBN-13: 9781616142186

If there is one thing that the "new atheism" (and much of the old atheism) is sure of, it is that religion is unrepentantly violent, even the root of all violence. James Haught wrote two books in the 1990s — *Holy Hatred: Religious Conflicts of the '90s* and *Holy Horrors: An Illustrated History of Religious Murder and Madness* — chronicling the "phenomenon of hatred, murder, and mayhem repeated over and over again in the name of one religion or another." Sam Harris formally launched the new atheism with his book *The End of Faith*, subtitled *Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason*, which opens with a vignette about a suicide bomber, warning that religious beliefs "are leading us, inexorably, to kill each other." A few pages later, he asserts that the "result" of religion "is an unending cycle of murder and cease-fire." Dawkins and Dennett in their contributions make religious violence less central to their argument, but Hitchens moves it front and center again in his *God is Not Great*. Plenty of other authors, without an atheist agenda, have concurred, like Mark Juergensmeyer in *Terror in the Mind of God* and Robin Wright in *Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam*, to name only two.

[Read more...](#)

## US Atheists, Agnostics Most Knowledgeable About Religion

28 September 2010

**Report says nonbelievers know more, on average, about religion than most faithful. Jews and Mormons also score high on the U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey.**

If you want to know about God, you might want to talk to an atheist.

Heresy? Perhaps. But a survey that measured Americans' knowledge of religion found that atheists and agnostics knew more, on average, than followers of most major faiths. In fact, the gaps in knowledge among some of the faithful may give new meaning to the term "blind faith."

A majority of Protestants, for instance, couldn't identify Martin Luther as the driving force behind the Protestant Reformation, according to the survey, released Tuesday by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. Four in 10

Quote from Pope's speech:

"Even in our own lifetime, we can recall how Britain and her leaders stood against **a Nazi tyranny that wished to eradicate God from society** and denied our common humanity to many, especially the Jews, who were thought unfit to live.

"I also recall the regime's attitude to Christian pastors and religious who spoke the truth in love, opposed the Nazis and paid for that opposition with their lives.

"As we reflect on the sobering lessons of the atheist extremism of the twentieth century, let us never forget how **the exclusion of God, religion and virtue from public life** leads ultimately to a truncated vision of man and of society and thus to a 'reductive vision of the person and his destiny' (Caritas in Veritate, 29)."

This comment was apparently made to disparage nontheists, British and otherwise. Some commentators suggested that the comment was made in anticipation of protestors confronting the Pope during his visit with the systemic and so-far unaddressed crimes of systemic pedophilia throughout the Catholic Church that have been disclosed over the past several years.

"Not only is the Pope the head of a morally bankrupt organization that is more interested in protecting its own power base than it is in protecting children, he is also stunningly lousy at European and Catholic history," stated AAI president Stuart Bechman. "Pope Ratzinger should know full well that the Nazi regime and the Catholic Church had a cozy arrangement of coexistence, having signed a Concordat guaranteeing Catholic priests and congregations full latitude in their practices in the Third Reich. Anyone who studied much of Nazi history would understand that allegiance to God - and the Nazis' belief that they were a "chosen people" - was a foundational cornerstone of their ideology reflected in widespread slogans such as "Children, Kitchen, Church" and "God Is With Us". It wasn't the German Catholics or Lutherans who were targeted for the concentration camps. It was the Jews, Gypsies, and intellectuals - including much of the German freethought community - whom Hitler sought to eradicate from German life."

"Pope Ratzinger is not a stupid man: He would not be Pope today if he was truly ignorant of the above. One has to conclude that he forwards this offensive fabrication at this time to accomplish some other goal - and since the most prominent controversy facing the Pope today is his failure to address and atone for the egregious abuses of children conducted by his church, we conclude that this charade is meant to divert from that issue."

Catholics misunderstood the meaning of their church's central ritual, incorrectly saying that the bread and wine used in Holy Communion are intended to merely symbolize the body and blood of Christ, not actually become them.

Atheists and agnostics — those who believe there is no God or who aren't sure — were more likely to answer the survey's questions correctly. Jews and Mormons ranked just below them in the survey's measurement of religious knowledge — so close as to be statistically tied.

[Read more...](#)

## American Values Voters Gear Up for 2010 Midterm Elections While Looking Ahead to 2012

Written by Ait Chapel | 27 September 2010

*Below is a preview article from the upcoming October issue of Secular Nation magazine.*

From September 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, less than two months before the USA 2010 midterm elections, which many believe will test the strength of both the Obama presidency and the Tea Party movement, approximately 2,000 Christian activists — some involved in the Tea Party, many just Christian conservatives — gathered in Washington D.C. for the Values Voter Summit, the United States' premier event for social conservatives. More prominent figures from the Republican Party present, such as former Massachusetts governor and 2008 presidential candidate (and likely 2012 candidate) Mitt Romney, mentioned "values" issues like "the right to life" and "the defense of marriage" than other issues while keeping their focus on the more usual list of grievances against the Obama administration, such as its lack of fiscal responsibility, "Obamacare," and the president's handling of national defense.

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## AFA: Catholicism 'Clutching at Straws'

20 September 2010

Catholicism 'Clutching at Straws' in Fight to Keep Religion Legitimate in Increasingly Enlightened World

Atheist Foundation of Australia, Sept. 20, 2010

Atheists are both amused and astounded by recent attempts to confuse and scare society

"For shame that the British government would be willing to act as enabler for a man and an organization that stands for such unmitigated and brazen evil. AAI calls on the British government to arrest Pope Benedict XVI for his role in leading an organization that appears at best to have reckless disregard, and at worst to be designed to take advantage of, children placed under its care. The government should move immediately to arrest Pope Benedict XVI and shut down all operations of the Catholic Church as a terrorist organization that should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

Written by Stuart Bechman | 09 September 2010

There is a lot of jabber in the US and international news media about the threat of a US minister to burn copies of the Quran this September 11 in commemoration of the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The US media, as well as the US government, seems to be of one mind that the minister, Rev. Terry Jones, ironically of the apparently misnamed "Dove World Outreach Center", is doing little more than promoting hate and intolerance towards Muslims. I have to agree, I cannot see any other value towards his call to burn the Quran on 9/11. Neither I nor AAI, nor does any other secularist group I know, support the Rev. Jones' actions. Even if it wasn't the Quran or tied to 9/11, we find book-burning of any sort to be a statement of intolerance and anathema to the principles of free expression enshrined in the principles of the US Constitution and recognized as a human right in the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

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## Policy Positions on Religion-Based Laws

Written by Atheist Alliance | 02 September 2010

**Atheist Alliance International**

**Policy Positions on Religion-Based Laws**

• ***Your Money AND Your Life*** •

**Introduction**

Thomas Jefferson said, "... it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg." True enough if religious belief were



about the prevalence of atheism. The Pope's pathetic attempt last week to align Nazism and so. Religions have always been agencies to control people. This is done through laws and possibly the lowest example of public fear-mongering on the issue in recent times. Coming from the head of the Catholic Church, it truly exposes the unfortunate situation of an institution confronted by science, social progress and increasing human intelligence.

David Nicholls, president of the Atheist Foundation of Australia said, "Really, we wouldn't expect anything less from a religion based on untruth and myth. Our ability to think critically and rationally about the world affords us great confidence and strength in our convictions."

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only a personal matter. This has never been so. Religions have always been agencies to control people. This is done through laws and public policies that put the coercive power of government into service to the dominant religion. Most people are unaware of the harm religion-based laws do in almost every area of life. This introduction to the Atheist Alliance International policy statement summarizes that harm. Some of us may escape some of it, but none of us can escape all of it.

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## Poles Stand Up for Church-State Separation

Written by Administrator | 11 August 2010

<http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100810/t-protest-against-polands-presidential-palace-cross/print.html>

The Christian Post  
Tue, Aug. 10, 2010 Posted: 01:51 PM EDT

Thousands of protesters gathered outside Poland's Presidential Palace in Warsaw Monday night to rally against the memorial cross that stands there in honor of the country's late president, Lech Kaczynski, who died in an airplane crash four months ago.

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### The New Atheism: Taking a Stand for Science and Reason

by Victor J. Stenger

In this new book, Victor J. Stenger, whose God: The Failed Hypothesis was on the New York Times bestseller list in 2007, reviews and expands upon the principles of New Atheism and answers many of its critics. He demonstrates in detail that naturalism--the view that all of reality is reducible to matter and nothing else--is sufficient to explain everything we observe in the universe, from the most distant galaxies to the inner workings of the brain that result in the phenomenon of mind.


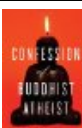


[\[more recommendations...\]](#)

### Good Without God: What a Billion Nonreligious People Do Believe

by Greg Epstein

In Good Without God, Greg Epstein presents another, more balanced and inclusive response: Humanism. With a focus on the positive, he highlights humanity's potential for goodness and the ways in which Humanists lead lives of purpose and compassion. Humanism can offer the sense of community we want and often need in good times and bad, as we celebrate marriages and the birth of our children, and as we care for those who are elderly or sick. In short, Humanism teaches us that we can lead good and moral lives without supernaturalism, without higher powers . . . without God.

[\[more recommendations...\]](#)

 and you're done. <a href="#">Privacy Information</a>	 <a href="#">Confession of a Buddhist Atheist</a> Stephen Batchelor New \$17.16 Best \$15.94	 <a href="#">The End of Reason</a> Ravi Zacharias, Le... New \$9.35 Best \$6.95	 <a href="#">Godless</a> Dan Barker New
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